

SENATOR HARP, REPRESENTATIVE GERAGOSIAN AND MEMBERS OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE,

My name is Myra Watnick. I am the Director of Rehabilitation Associates of Connecticut, Inc. We are one of the General Birth to Three Programs and as ABC Intervention we specifically provide services to Children on the Autism Spectrum. Staff is trained to administer testing and provide an educational classification of Autism as well as setting up programs and delivering services to children and families. In addition, I am a Governor appointed member of the Interagency Coordinating Council which advises the Department of Developmental Services on the Birth to Three Program.

I want to thank you for your past support of the Birth to Three Program and ask you for your continued support with the present Governor's proposed budget and the Birth to Three Program. In these difficult economic times, it is hard to ask for funding but this program has proven itself to be one of the best investments of state and federal dollars.

- 65% of the children who received Birth to Three Services did not need special education by kindergarten. The State is saving approximately \$12,000 per year for each child from Birth to Three who is not receiving special education services (approximately 1400 children)
- 98% of the families receiving Birth to Three services reported that Birth to Three helped them to help their children develop and learn
- Birth to Three has worked hard to use outside funds whenever possible
Commercial Insurance Reimbursement was almost 3,500,000 dollars
Medicaid Reimbursement (which went back to the General Fund) was 4,300,000 dollars
Parent fees offset costs by almost 700,000 dollars

Over the past year over 9000 children received Birth to Three services in the State. We look forward to continuing this exceptional program.....with your help!